This story is a fantasy and is set in the Shire where the hobbits live. Bilbo Baggins, a remarkably old and eccentric hobbit, throws a spectacular all-day party to celebrate his 111th birthday and his cousin Frodo's 33rd. At this moment of the story, there is a fantastic firework display before the feasting and Bilbo's after-dinner speech begins.

There were rockets like a flight of scintillating birds singing with sweet voices. There were green trees with trunks of dark smoke: their leaves opened like a whole spring unfolding in a moment, and their shining branches dropped glowing flowers down upon the astonished hobbits, disappearing with a sweet scent just before they touched their upturned faces. There were fountains of butterflies that flew glittering into the trees; there were pillars of coloured fires that rose and turned into eagles, or sailing ships, or a phalanx of flying swans; there was a red thunderstorm and a shower of yellow rain; there was a forest of silver spears that sprang suddenly into the air with a yell like an embattled army, and came down again into the water with a hiss like a hundred hot snakes. And there was also one last surprise, in honour of Bilbo, and it startled the hobbits exceedingly, as Gandalf intended. The lights went out. A great smoke went up. It shaped itself like a mountain seen in the distance, and began to glow at the summit. It spouted green and scarlet flames. Out flew a red -golden dragon - not life-size, but terribly life-like: fire came from his jaws, his eyes glared down; there was a roar, and he whizzed three times over the heads of the crowd. They all ducked, and many fell flat on their faces. The dragon passed like an express train, turned a somersault, and burst over Bywater with a deafening explosion.

"That is the signal for supper!" said Bilbo. The pain and alarm vanished at once, and the prostrate hobbits leapt to their feet and they jostled their way to the tables. There was a splendid supper for everyone in the great pavilion with the tree. The invitations had been splendidly written in golden ink and had been sent to all the families to which Bilbo and Frodo were related, with the addition of a few special unrelated friends (such as Gandalf).

All the one hundred and forty-four guests expected a pleasant feast; though they rather dreaded the after-dinner speech of their host (an inevitable item). The guests were not disappointed: they had a very pleasant feast, in fact an engrossing entertainment: rich, abundant, varied, and prolonged. After the feast (more or less) came the speech. Most of the company were, however, now in a tolerant mood, at that delightful stage which they called 'filling up the corners'. They were sipping their favourite drinks, and nibbling at their favourite dainties, and their fears were forgotten. They were prepared to listen to anything, and to cheer at every full stop.

"My dear people," began Bilbo, rising in his place.

'Hear! Hear! Hear!' erupted the chorus of guests as they banged and clattered the tables in unison.

Bilbo left his place and went and stood on a chair under the illuminated tree. The light of the lanterns fell on his beaming face; the golden buttons shone on his embroidered silk waistcoat. They could all see him standing, waving one hand in the air, the other was in his trouser -pocket.

"I hope you are all enjoying yourselves as much as I am. Tonight, I have three things to tell you all dear friends. First of all, I must tell you that I am immensely fond of you all, and that eleventy-one years is too short a time to live among such excellent and admirable hobbits."

A tremendous outburst of approval reverberated around the room, which both delighted and encouraged Bilbo to continue.